

# Memo

To: Town Council  
From: Matt Hart, Town Manager  
CC: Town Employees  
Date: February 14, 2012  
Re: Town Manager's Report

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Below please find a report regarding various items of interest to the Town Council, staff and the community:

## **Council Requests for Information/Council Business**

- *Report of Zoning Official* - Recent economic conditions have resulted in a significant reduction of building activity, especially with regard to new construction of homes/businesses. This decline has had a corresponding decrease in site inspections made by the Zoning Agent compared to previous years. Additionally, the adoption of the new nuisance ordinance has increased the town's ability to deal with neighborhood nuisances beyond issues addressed solely by the Zoning Regulations. Enforcement of these new regulations along with the long history of zoning enforcement on student related issues has resulted in a corresponding decrease in zoning related nuisance issues. It is also important to note that staff is in the process of evaluating and changing enforcement strategies to address potential violations of zoning regulations related to the number of unrelated individuals that may live in one dwelling unit. An unintended and unanticipated result of the residential parking regulations for rental properties has been that the number of vehicles parked on a property can no longer be used as evidence related to the number of individuals residing on the property as the regulations specifically allow for guest parking. This resulted in fewer enforcement letters during the fall 2011 semester as staff works to identify other mechanisms for identifying violations.

## **Departmental/Division News**

- *Town Manager's Office*
  - *Budget Retreat* – We need to complete the Town Council budget retreat following our session on debt financing and the capital improvement program. I recommend that we complete the retreat with a special meeting at 5:30PM prior to your next regular meeting on February 27, 2012. At the session, we will update you on the Town's financial position and the status of our work on the FY 2012/13 budget. We would also like to discuss Council goals and priorities at this meeting.
  - *Customer Service Workshop* – Mansfield was the host today for a CCM workshop entitled "Achieving Excellence in Municipal Customer Service." The workshop was free to all employees of CCM member towns. A total of 58 attendees from around the state participated including 19 Mansfield employees. Key points of discussion included: increasing customer satisfaction, increasing productivity and efficiency, improving rapport among co-workers and departments, personality styles, and learning how to deal with a difficult customer.

- *Healthy Workplace Employer Recognition Program* - The Town of Mansfield-Mansfield Board of Education-Regional School District #19 and the Eastern Highlands Health District were recognized by the Business Council of Fairfield County 2012 *Healthy Workplace Employer Recognition Program*. Mansfield received the Platinum level recognition –the highest level of recognition – for being an employer with well established comprehensive healthy workplace programs that have demonstrated measurable success and documented outcomes. Ande Bloom, our Be Well Coordinator served as a panelist on “The Journey to Wellness Panel Discussion.” Mansfield was the only municipal employer honored for the 2012 awards. Other (sample) recipients of the platinum recognition included Nestle Waters, Pitney Bowes, People’s United Bank, Sikorsky, and Stew Leonard’s.
- *Interstate Reliability Project* – Town staff has been working with the Connecticut Siting Council staff to find a location for an April public hearing on the Interstate Reliability Project. Information on the hearing will be posted on the Town’s website once it is published by the Siting Council. I have also reviewed with the Town Attorney and other staff the process for serving as an intervenor or a party to the application. Given our resources, I believe that it would be preferable for the Town to participate in the public hearing process as opposed to filing as a party or an intervenor. Staff will plan to proceed along these lines unless the Town Council feels differently.
- *Legislative updates* – The Mayor and I have recently attended WINCOG’s session with local state legislators and the CCM Legislative Committee meeting. The General Assembly’s session is now underway and business will move quickly during the first few weeks of this “short session.” Senator Williams and Representative Haddad will attend the next Council meeting to brief you on key issues and to solicit your input on legislative items of interest to the Town.

### **Major Projects and Initiatives**

- *Storrs Center Construction Update* – Delivery of the pre-cast materials for the parking garage began on February 13. Work on the extension of utilities for the Phase 1A buildings on Dog Lane began last week and will continue for approximately two weeks. After the tree work is completed on Storrs Road, utility work will begin on Storrs Road. Work will begin on the additional utility work, new sidewalks and drainage early this spring, starting on the west side of Storrs Road in front of EO Smith and the Town Hall. As noted in a press release from the Mansfield Downtown Partnership, Dog Lane will be closed during the day to through traffic while the utility work and access to the parking garage site continues. Dog Lane is open to residents and businesses in the neighborhood. Residents, visitors, and workers are advised to proceed with caution through this area. While every effort is being made to manage traffic flow, there may be delays as the construction vehicles navigate the site. Please remember to drive slowly through the construction area and maintain a safe distance between yourself and oversized vehicles. The Partnership continues to maintain a construction website for updates at <http://storrscenterconstruction.blogspot.com>.
- *Water and Sewer Projects* – I attended the February 7<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Four Corners Water and Sewer Advisory Committee. The consulting engineers are making progress on the environmental impact evaluation (EIE) for the UConn/Town water supply initiative, but we now expect to receive the draft in the late April/early May timeframe.

## **Upcoming Events**

- *Winter Fun Day* – The Mansfield Downtown Partnership and the Town of Mansfield Parks and Recreation Department hosted the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Winter Fun Day on Saturday, February 4<sup>th</sup> at the Mansfield Community Center. While there was not any snow, a record number of Mansfield residents and visitors enjoyed sunshine, brisk weather, and ice sculptures, horse drawn wagon rides, crafts and games. The Mansfield Public Library provided winter-themed storytelling and crafts inside the Center, allowing everyone a chance to warm up and still partake in the fun. The Southeast, Vinton, and Goodwin Parent Teacher Organizations served up free hot chocolate while Stan's Curbside Grill sold warm refreshments, including hotdogs and kielbasa. Musical entertainment was provided by UConn student *a cappella* groups: The Chordials, Notes Over Storrs, and Rolling Tones. Volunteers from UConn's Office of Community Outreach and the E. O. Smith Leos Club helped make the event a success.

## **Upcoming Meetings\***

- Human Services Advisory Committee, February 15, 2012, 2:00 PM, Conference Room B, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Sustainability Committee, February 15, 2012, 5:00 PM, Conference Room C, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Conservation Commission, February 15, 2012, 7:30 PM, Conference Room B, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Personnel Committee, February 21, 2012, 6:00 PM, Conference Room C, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Planning and Zoning Commission, February 21, 2012, 7:00 PM, Council Chambers, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Finance Committee, February 21, 2012, 2:00 PM, Conference Room B, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building
- Town Council, Monday, February 27, 2012, 7:30PM, Council Chambers, Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building

*\*Meeting dates/times are subject to change. Please view the [Town Calendar](#) or contact the Town Clerk's Office at 860-429-3302 for a complete and up-to-date listing of committee meetings.*